

Mental by afoolproofplan

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Summary:

As the threat of the mind flayer once again descends upon the sleepy town of Hawkins Indiana Will must take action, just as soon as he figures out if it's all in his head or not.

1. 6 Days

Author's Note:

Author's Notes: The last bit of fanfiction I wrote was literally on jan 17th 2006. I was very disappointed at the appalling shortage of will/mike fanfiction, so I'm determined to create my own, lose interest, and eventually abandon it. Also I doesn't write so good. This is set about a year after season 2, and is meant to be cannon. This will not be PWP, it will have a plot hopefully if you stick around for the ride.

6 Days

Boredom. It gnawed at him as well as any demodog could. It brought him back to a smell of a musty basement and a time when monsters were all made up, the electric contagious excitement as Jonathan introduced him to one of his new favorite songs, the crack as a Charleston Chew broken into a hundred tiny pieces after an interminable wait in the freezer.

Dirty blond hair fell over rounded shoulders as he began a gentle ceaseless rocking in the rickety wooden chair.

The empty pain and weakness of a week without food while in that cold desolate hell, the sound a dinner plate makes as it's shattered against the wall creating a momentary pause in his parents endless shouting match, gunfire and the frantic last cries of a soldier, searing agony and the burning look of hatred and determination his mother gives before turning up the heater

"No, no, n-no... nonono," he mumbled quietly against the onslaught of memories, his rocking becoming more intense. His left arm lifted

a few inches off of the grimy white plastic table and began moving up and down toward his heaving chest rhythmically in time with the rocking.

Will reached for a cyan blue crayon with his right hand, made slightly more difficult by his continual moment, and pressed it lightly to construction before him. He drew unseeing, the page already marred by so many overlapping colors you could scarcely tell what color it began as.

6 days , he reassured himself internally. He would see his shrink, he would expound on how well the new medication was doing, and be given the green light to go home. He just had to survive 6 more day to be set free, then he could kill it and everything could be normal again.

“And how are we doing today Mr. Byers?” The sudden appearance of a nurse by his side startled him out his thoughts so bad he bucked in his chair, bony knees knocking painfully against the underside of the table.

“B-burning,” he answered then paused to take a breath, “6 day .. d-days, 6 days.. Soldiers, ate t-the the.. Ate the cat” he took another deep breath and a look of determination crossed his young face as he forcefully spat out the next words, “R-roll a, roooll 14 ... 14, h-home M-mike, Michael.”

“Alright,” she replied in her sickly sweet voice without missing a beat, placing a plastic cup full of what appears to be water on the crayon covered paper in front of him.

Is it safe? Poison?

“William?”

Will momentarily ceases his rocking and leans forward to smell the suspect liquid but stops short when the nurse attempts to get his attention by placing a hand heavily on his shoulder.

“William?” He turns his head and her brown eyes meet his hazel ones.

She knows what he is thinking, she's a spy.

“I have your clozapine, and your valbenazine, and the Doctor has given you something to help you sleep through the night, ok?” She holds out a small white paper cup to Will, and when he doesn't show any sign of taking it she grabs his left hand, still moving up and down between the table and his chest, and stills it, placing it in his palm.

He hesitates, staring down at pills in the cup. A round light orange one, an oblong yellow one, and he noticed an unfamiliar light blue gel tablet glittering up at him. *A new one? But why?*

“Go on,” he hears her feminine voice above him, “take them.”

The nurse is impatient, urging him to pull the trigger. He begins the gentle rocking as he contemplates his own death currently sitting in his left hand.

“We can do this the easy way or the hard way,” the Demon threatens, “well... which one is it gonna be?”

He looks up at the monster, tears welling in his almond shaped eyes, hoping for any sort of mercy. Her back is to him, she’s looking over at the nurses station, her hand raised—motioning for orderlies.

Panic stricken he slams his right right hand down on the table to get the Monster’s attention. Her murderous eyes on him, he lifts the tiny white cup to his chapped lips. Holding back a sob, hot tears streaming down his pallid cheeks he dumps the pills in his mouth. Quickly he grabs the plastic cup of forgotten poison she had placed on his drawing minutes ago and used it to chase his own demise. It tasted like water.

Two heavily built men clad in white flank the sides of the Monster even before he has time to get a breath in. One puts his large hand on Will’s shoulder in a bruising grip, steadying his rocking.

He opens his mouth as wide as he can, exposing his soul to her.

“Good boy!” she cooed patronizingly at Will. He is a coward, he stares at his barefeet in shame.

“Now why don’t we get you to bed, huh?” She makes it sound like a question but he knows better.

He swallows hard and clears his throat before pleading his case, “ I wa ... I c-can walk?” His voice cracks pathetically. *Please, please...*

She looks at him appraisingly for a moment then mercifully she relented. “Ok,” she said gently to Will, then looking up to orderlies, “Accompany him please.”

He immediately begins to gather his crayons before she can reconsider. He’s just finished tucking away the cyan blue one when oversized hands snatch them away. He freezes instinctively, arms wrapping around his stomach protectively.

“C’mon!” the other beast grunts impatiently tightening the hold on Will’s bony shoulder.

He whimpered as he stood up on shaky legs, the oversized hospital gown falling around his thin legs. The three of them made their way out of the common room, Will’s small form looking even more diminutive between them. He’s marched down one corridor then another before coming to a room with no door, the hand still on his shoulder threateningly. Once inside he covered the short distance to the bed and threw himself into it obediently pulling the threadbare blanket up to chin.

He watched with baited breath as one of the men entered the room and dropped his crayons onto a metal tray beside his bed with dull clang.

He looked at Will and held up a finger warningly, “Stay,” he commanded sternly before exiting.

Will lets out a breath he didn't realize he was holding in. At least they didn't take him down to segregation and strap him down again.

Even crazy people don't like being tied down, he thought bitterly before the cocktail of drugs began to kick in and sleep overtook him.

2. Into the abyss

Notes for the Chapter:

Ok I struggled so hard to get this out, and even now I wanna go back and change a bunch of stuff. This is why I don't write stuff. I don't wanna give anything away in case I actually finish this, but you know just be warned it's dark and kinda twisted.

Will woke early, or at least what he thought was early, there was no window to connect him to the outside world. The overhead light in his room was off, the ever present fluorescent glow from the hallway cast dim shadows on the moldy, water-stained ceiling.

He felt clear headed, no lingering traces of nightmares to decipher like so many times before. Was it the new pill? He made a mental note to ask Dr. Leonhard about it.

Shivers rocked Will's body, even with the ragged blanket pulled tight to his chin, the room so quiet and empty it hurt. He thought about what his Mother was doing, hurriedly getting ready for work? Jonathan cooking breakfast? Were they thinking of him? They used to visit twice a week the first time he was locked up here, now he was lucky if they were able to make the 2 hour drive once a week.

Mike was the only one of his friends to ever visit him. Lucas and Dustin had both sent him Birthday Cards, though he wondered if it was at Mike's behest.

Hot tears welled in his eyes and he sucked in a breath as a tightness came over his chest.

Do they want me to come back?

He gripped the thin blanket tightly in his small hands as a sadness so intense it manifested itself in physical pain washed over him, he began gently rocking, his cheek rhythmically sliding over the roughness of the plastic hospital sheet. His chest felt heavy and every breath was a struggle.

Will had definitely never fit in school, but even within their small group he felt alien. He was quiet, he never had anything to say, and when he did he was too afraid to say it. Dustin was smart and funny, he always had something to say. Lucas was brave and outspoken, Mike's best friend.

Mike, well, Mike was cool. His house was the biggest and he always had the best and newest toys; the unofficial leader, and more recently the first of them to kiss a girl.

What was Will? At best a parasite, an annoyance, at worst a mass murderer. A diagnosed paranoid Schizophrenic. He hated that they had given it a name, that he had to swallow pills they could barely afford twice a day, it made it more permanent, it made it real. Calling it crazy made it easier to explain away the things they couldn't understand.

"Hey, well, if we're both going crazy, then we'll go crazy together, right?"

Mike's words play over in his head as a he chokes out a sob. He pulled the worn blanket over his head, curling up and wrapping his arms around his stomach protectively.

But they didn't though, he thought bitterly. He was the only one locked up in a mental hospital, forgotten and alone.

This was his third stay in 11 months. He would never catch up in school and all he was doing was wasting time. He wasted time lying in bed every day, wasted time talking to doctors that didn't understand, wasted time wondering if any of this was real.

...and try as he might he could not recall why he was here. This was the third time Will had been here, he was so sure of that, but whenever he tried to think of how he came to be here, as he often did, he drew an unnerving blank.

The first imprisonment was very clear in his mind.

He had started to be able to read people's thoughts some weeks prior to jumping. It started off slowly, the girl he danced with at the Snow

Ball thought he smelled dead, like something that had rotted in water. He began wondering if he was still possessed.

The lunch lady was working for the government, she was spying for them. He stopped going into the lunch room, awkwardly waited for his friends at a safe distance. He didn't tell them the reason, he didn't want to involve them anymore then he already had.

Will stopped looking people in the eye because it made it easier for them to read his thoughts. He woke everyday into a nightmare.

He had jumped off the cliff at sattler's quarry into the water below. The doctors had called it a suicide attempt. They didn't understand, how could they?

"Weren't you afraid of dying?"

It was a stupid question, of course Will was, he was as afraid as anyone looking over that cliff and into the water, maybe more so. Will had nothing against life, it wasn't as if he found being dead suddenly appealing. You would have had to have been there, fighting for your mind and your life, to understand a fear much worse than death.

Will had thrown his arms over his head, using the sleeves of his hand me down jacket to cover his eyes—too afraid to see his own end. He had fractured 2 vertebrae as his feet hit the water, he swore he could feel them explode into shards beneath his skin. He had broken his right arm, 4 ribs and his mother's heart. He didn't know how many times she'd made him promise he would never do that again in the proceeding six week stay in the hospital.

Will was transferred to Central State Hospital formally Central Indiana Hospital for the Insane, Indiana's largest mental hospital and put in the acute admissions ward. It was for people in a highly disturbed state needing a lot of care and drugs until they were stabilized. About half of the people in this ward were "sectioned" or legally detained, their rooms had doors and often remained locked.

Deinstitutionalization of the mentally ill had started for Indiana about a decade ago. Some people, those deemed chronically ill or elderly people with dementia could languish here for decades, but the Republican Reagan administration's sweeping budget cuts had insured a revolving door for most patients. Thirty days was the general rule of thumb for when you would be given your final evaluation and be marked as stable and able to return to society.

Here at Central tranquilizers were treated as panacea, most patients in slippers and hospital gowns doing what was known as the Thorazine Shuffle, a lethargic walk while rendered nearly catatonic by the potent anti-psychosis medication. Receiving forced injections, assembly line shock treatments (or ECT Therapy), overworked disgruntled nurses, and physical restraints were all routine.

Will hated and feared the physical restraints the most, they left him bruised and traumatized. Every patient here was doing a one man show, and a lot of times it was pure chaos, sometimes the ward suffocating in tension, others in empathy and sorrow. For the most part Will kept to himself, only going between his room and the common room to watch TV or draw.

He lay in bed for the an hour or more, the anguish eventually giving way to frustration and bewilderment.

Why had he been sent here again?

If Will was sure of anything it was that he had not jumped off a cliff again. He felt certain that if he'd survived again, he would have remembered that. He would ask mom as soon as he saw her next, he thought while vaguely wondering if he was too late for coffee.

Morning coffee was a habit he'd picked up in the hospital, and quite possibly the only good thing about the hospital.

He sat up slow and waited for the morning stiffness to ease from his back, he tapped his left foot against the cold tile floor and worried his bottom lip with his teeth until it was sore, the urge to move overwhelming. They called it names like the thorazine shuffle, because Tardive dyskinesia wasn't exactly catchy. It was yet another side effect to anti-psychosis drugs—involuntary repetitive body

movements, any attempts he made to stifle these was futile.

Will shuddered to think how Troy and the rest of the school would react when he got back. He'd hoped when he switched from thorazine to clozapine it would have stopped this, and was crushed when he developed a stutter from clozapine. This combined with the loose association and word salad he was already struggling with assured he was nothing short of a walking, stuttering freak show.

He let out a breath and inhaled deeply, doing his best to force a smile while picking up his crayons. He didn't want to cry in the breakfast line again. He walked down the hall tensing as the cold air penetrated his thin hospital gown.

To his great relief the coffee urn was still out when he reached the common room, he grabbed a styrofoam cup and filled it about three fourths of the way full with coffee before dumping mountains of powdered creamer and sugar into it. He grabbed a plastic spoon and chose an empty table close to the TV set.

To his pleasure He-Man and the Masters of the Universe was only just starting and Will allowed his worries to fade with the theme song. He watched with rapt attention as a dragon attempted to destroy the defenses around castle Grayskull.

He doodled the sword of power while still sipping on his now cold coffee, the sugar still grainy against his teeth. He dropped the crayon in frustration after a few minutes, the constant rocking of his shoulders prevented him from achieving the straight lines he needed. Cartoons faded into the afternoon news as the nurses began delivering medications. His mood grew sour as he watched an elderly man argue vehemently with one of the nurses.

"...Tragedy in the quiet town of hawkins today" Will's heart skipped a beat as his attention turned back to the TV set "...as the Buick Station Wagon of Roger Chaffee went careening into a ditch today, the driver Mr. Chaffee had apparently fallen asleep at the wheel," the middle aged journalist said with a hint of disapproval while standing on a dirt road, the wreckage of a brown station wagon being cleared away behind him. "The driver was killed upon impact, his wife and

two teenage sons were taken to Hawkins memorial hospital in critical condition.”

Will wondered if Jonathan knew the sons, a happy family photo of the unfortunate victims flashing across the screen as the newscaster continued on about the dangers of driving while exhausted.

He was so engrossed in his own thoughts he jumped when a small can of 7-Up was set in front of him.

A paper cup containing pills set down next it.

“Sorry sweetheart, I didn’t mean to scare you,” the older nurse said while opening the can of soda.

Will peered in the paper cup suspiciously. Just the normal two this time, the light blue one from the night before absent. He picked it up and dumped the pills into his mouth chasing them with with the syrupy sweet remain of his coffee.

“You ought to have something” The elderly woman said disapprovingly while looking over as the styrofoam cup. “ECT tomorrow so they wont give you supper,” she continued warningly.

Will nodded guiltily in reply, but remained quiet, afraid he’d stutter.

He hated ECT days, the headache he got from the anesthetic, the soreness in his jaw. He was on his sixth of a course ten bilateral ECT therapy sessions and he couldn’t wait to be done with them. At first the idea of voluntary electrocution had seemed truly insane and conjured nightmarish images of death row inmates being strapped to electric chairs. Now they seemed almost routine, he had no memory of them, whether as a side effect from the treatment or the anesthetic Will didn't know.

They were supposed to cure him from his supposed hallucinations and depression. He’d argued with his doctor about it for a time, but in the end consented to the shock treatments.

It was crazy, but screw it Will thought apathetically as he started on the luke-warm can of soda, resigned to his fate. When staring into the abyss, reaching for lighting didn’t seem so bad after all.